

November 11, 2015

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

**In the Matter of Nomination for Universal Service Administrative Company Board of Directors,
CC Docket Nos. 97-21 and 96-45.**

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

The undersigned national education organizations nominate Dr. Sheryl Abshire of Lake Charles, Louisiana to serve on the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) Board of Directors. We respectfully urge you to appoint Dr. Abshire as the board representative for eligible schools. She is uniquely situated to serve in this position, based on her respected technical and educational expertise and longstanding experience leading implementation of complex and critically important school district technology and broadband initiatives.

Dr. Abshire's impressive career includes decades of service to the nation's students and their families as a teacher, librarian, principal, and technology leader. Since 1998, Dr. Abshire has served as Chief Technology Officer for Calcasieu Parish Public Schools in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the state's fourth largest school district. As CTO, she expertly leads the district's major technology initiatives, including designing strategies for expanding students' broadband access, leading the district's digital transition, and providing trusted advice about integrating technology into other district efforts to improve teaching and learning. This work includes overseeing every detail of her district's technology plans and E-Rate applications, using an approach that models the program's efficient and effective implementation.

Dr. Abshire also has a long record of national and state service. She ably served on the USAC board from 2010 to 2013, testified before Congress about technology and privacy issues, and has served as a rich source of information for the Federal Communications Commission. She currently serves as a Board Member of the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN). She is past President, and an active member of the Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators, an affiliate of the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), and a member of the National Education Association, serving for many years on NEA's Legislative Committee. Additionally, Dr. Abshire has served for over twenty years on the Board of Directors for the Teachers Retirement System of Louisiana (TRLS), is the past Chairman of the TRSL, and as the current Vice Chair and Chair of the Investment Committee, has the responsibility for overseeing and investing the \$17 billion fund.

The next school representative on the USAC board should possess primary knowledge of the E-rate's operation at the local level and possess a clear vision for strengthening the program's

future. Dr. Abshire deeply understands every element of the E-rate, including how to achieve the initiative's updated connectivity goals and sophisticated requirements. Our organizations believe this technical expertise must be represented on the USAC Board and appreciate your careful consideration of our nomination.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Excellent Education

Association of School Business Officials

Consortium for School Networking

International Society for Technology in Education

National Association of Elementary School Principals

National Association of Secondary School Principals

National Association of State Boards of Education

National Catholic Educational Association

National Education Association

National PTA

DR. SHERYL R. ABSHIRE
Calcasieu Parish School System
1724 Kirkman Street Lake Charles, LA
337-217-4100 ext. 1001 337-217-4101 (fax)
sheryl.abshire@cpsb.org

AFFILIATION: Calcasieu Parish Public Schools

TITLE: Chief Technology Officer

EDUCATION: McNeese State University

BA, Early Childhood Education, 1972

MA, Elementary Education, 1975

Educational Specialist, Administration and Supervision, 1988

University of New Orleans

Ph.D., Educational Administration and Leadership, 2007

CERTIFICATION:

Kindergarten, Grades 1-8, School Librarian, Principal, Supervisor of Instruction, School Superintendent

POSITIONS:

Calcasieu Parish School System

Chief Technology Officer, 1998 -present

Principal, Prien Lake Elementary, 1995 - 1998

Principal, Westwood Elementary, 1991- 1995

Librarian/Media Specialist: 1978 - 1990, College Oaks

Elementary, St. John Elementary, T.S. Cooley
Elementary

Second & Fourth Grade Teacher: 1973 - 1978, T.S. Cooley

Elementary, Opelousas Street Elementary

Lamar State University

Assistant Professor – Online Graduate Program - 2010 - 2013

McNeese State University

Visiting Instructor, Ed Tech 245, 2015 - 2016

EDLD 660, School Personnel Management, 2008, 2009

Instructor, Education 660, Technology for School Administrators, 1997

Visiting Lecturer, 1990 - 1997

Instructor, Educational Technology 650, 1989

Student Teaching Supervisor, 10 years

Louisiana Tech University

Instructor, Education 489, Curriculum Enhancement with Technology, 2001 –
2011;

LEADTech – 2001 – 2011

EXTENDED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Universal Services Administrative Corporation (USAC) – Board member 2010 – 2013,
appointed by

FCC to represent the nation's schools and libraries on ERate matters.

Teachers Retirement System of Louisiana – Board of Trustees – 1991- present, Vice-Chair of the Board – 2010 – present, Chair of the Board – 2005 - 2008, Chair – Investment Committee – 2001 – 2004, 2010 – present

LACUE – Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators - President, 2004- 2006, Vice President – Advocacy and Programs - 2007 – present, Program/State Awards Chair, Board of Directors

LA-CTO – Louisiana Chief Technology Officers Association – Founding member & Exec. Comm. Chair – 2005 – present

Advisory Boards - eSchool News Advisory Board – 2006 – present; Blackboard Advisory Board – 2002- present; Scholastic Administrator Advisory Board – 2002- present, Dell Platinum Advisory Council - 2009 – present, Pearson Digital Learning Advisory Board – 2005 – 2008, Compaq Advisory Board – 1998 – 2000, Knowledge Adventure Advisory Board – 1999 – 2001

Consortium for School Networking (CoSN) - National Board of Directors and Exec. Comm. 2000 – present, Chair of the Board – 2005 – 2009, Chair of the Public Policy Committee 2000 – present

ISTE Standards and Accreditation Committee – 2004 - 2013

ISTE National Technology Standards for School Administrators Writing Team - 2000 – 2013

National Science Foundation (NSF) Computational Thinking Practitioners - Workshop Leader, Chicago, IL, 2010

USA/UK International Exchange Technology Leadership Project Coordinator -1996 - present

Chairman – Louisiana State Technology Advisory Commission, 1997 – 2008

Promethean Advisory Board - 2011 – 2013

Calcasieu Parish Public Library Strategic Planning Committee - 2002 - 2003

Chairman – Louisiana Dept. of Ed. Committee to Advance Technology Standards, 1998 – 2011

Louisiana Department of Education Technology Planning Committee

ISTE National Ed Tech Standards for Students Connecting Curriculum and Technology Writing Team

Project Director: Louisiana Assistive Technology Initiative – 2007 - present, Cellular Telecommunications Industry of America – Panasonic Classlink Grant, Grant Administrator

Numerous EETT Grants, Calcasieu Parish Challenge Grant, Louisiana TLCF Professional Development Program, Drew Foundation - 1993-97

Program Administrator: Louisiana Quality Ed Support Fund – 8(g) Grants, 1990-91, 1995-96, 1996-97

Trainer/Grant Writer/Grant Evaluator: Coronet/MTI, AT&T, Apple Computer, Pioneer

Communications, Pioneer New Media Technologies, Educational Resources, National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, Lightspan Partnership, Compaq Computer, Roger Wagner Publishing, eSchool News, America Online Foundation, Mississippi Department of Education, West Virginia Department of Education, University of Oregon, Knowledge Adventure, Beaumont Foundation of America; Tech/Reading and Learning Diversity Group, National Science Foundation
Louisiana Network Information Infrastructure Steering Committee – 1994
U.S. Advisory Council for the National Information Infrastructure Sub-Committee – 1994
Louisiana Goals 2000 Commission – 1994
National Education Association – Legislative Committee – 2005- 2011, Instructional and Professional Development Committee, Professional Standards and Practices Committee - 1991 – 1999, Membership Advisory Committee – 1999 – 2005 (Co-Chair – 2002-2005)
Louisiana Association of Educators – Board of Directors, Chair - Instructional Practices Committee,
Chair – Member Benefits Committee, Chair – Legislative Committee
Louisiana - Governor Edwards - Technology Task Force, Education Transition Team Task Force
Louisiana Systemic Initiatives State Program Panel, McNeese State University Teacher Education Advisory Panel, NBC/KPLC Great Expectations/Class Act Ed Proj Bd, NTE Nat Advisory Committee

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS:

2013 National Coalition for Technology in Education & Training Community Builder Award
Louisiana Technology Council – 2012 Eward – Governor’s Technology Educator of the Year
Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance – The Edge – Ed Tech Award Winner
2010
Selected as an honoree/case study for the GETideas.org Distinguished Education Leaders
2010
ISTE Public Policy Advocate of the Year – 2009
University of New Orleans- Outstanding Doctoral Student in Educational Leadership – 2008
ISTE Making It Happen Award - 2006
National Ed Tech Leader of the Year – 2003 semi-finalist
NEA – 2002 Christa McAuliffe Award
LACUE – 1999 Louisiana Computer Using Educator of the Year
McNeese State University Distinguished Alumnus Award - 1998
National Principal's Leadership Academy – University of Delaware, 1993-1994
Inductee: National Teachers Hall of Fame, 1992
Recognized by President Clinton and Secretary Riley at a White House ceremony as the first teacher
inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame, 1993
1992 Phi Delta Kappa Award
1991 National Foundation for the Improvement of Education – Christa McAuliffe Fellow
1991 Louisiana Technology Teacher of the Year

PUBLICATIONS

Abshire, S., Mason, D., Cumming, C.D., Abernathy, L. K. (2014) Building Literacy with Popular Web 2.0 Tools. In M. Gura (Ed.) (2014) *Teaching Literacy in the Digital Age. Technology and Literacy*, Eugene, OR: International Society for Technology in Education.

Cummings, C., Mason, D., Abshire, S., & Borel, D. (2013). Learner interaction in e-learning. In M. Ally & B. Kahn (Eds.). *International handbook of e-learning*. Athabasca, Canada: Athabasca University.

Abernathy, K., Mason, D., Abshire, S., Cummings, C., Borel, D.A., and Lui, X. (2012). Building leadership capacity: The use of electronic portfolios and web 2.0 tools. *National Social Science Technology Journal*.

Abshire, S. R., Cummings, C. D. Mason, D. R., Abernathy, L. K., Young, K. (2013). Pk-12 teacher use of web 2.0 tools. *National Social Sciences Technology Journal*. (10 to 15% acceptance of all articles submitted to this journal.)

Levinson, E., Magart, M., Wilcox, B., Meyer, D., Knopp, G., Isquierdo, M., Hall, D., Abshire, S., Karcher, D., Esch, E., Economu, R., & Wyld, R. (September 24, 2012) Implementing 1:1 computing: Getting close, but content still falls short. *MDR Research Reports*.

Mason, D.R., Abernathy, L. K., Abshire, S. R., Cummings, C.D. (2012). Advancing Leadership: Results of an Online Technology Leadership Master's Program. National Council of Professors of Educational Administration.

Mason, D., Abernathy, K., Abshire, S., Cummings, C., & Liu, X. (2012). Evaluation of an online technology leadership master's program. In J. Tareilo & B. Bizzell (Eds.), *NCPEA handbook of virtual/online instruction and programs in educational leadership* (pp. 183-207). Ypsilanti, MI: NCPEA Press. ISBN 978-1-4507-7263-1

Abernathy, K., Mason, D., Abshire, S., & Cummings, C. (2011, March). *Use of e-portfolios in the Lamar University educational technology leadership online master's program*. Inter/national Coalition for Electronic Portfolio Research Institute Report 2. March 18-19, 2011, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Abernathy, K., Mason, D., Abshire, S., Cummings, C., Borel, D., Stephens, L. & Mixon, J. (March, 2011). *Using cloud computing tools for assessment and reflection*. Paper presented at the Lamar University Education Research Conference. March 24-25, 2011, Lamar University, Beaumont, TX.

Abernathy, K., Mason, D. Cummings, C., Stephens, L., Abshire, S. & Mixon, J. (2011). Taking k-12 to the cloud: Building an online master's program. *National Social Science Technology Journal*.

Abernathy, K., Mason, D. Abshire, S., Cummings, C., & Mixon, J. (2011, October). *Electronic portfolios: Using web 2.0 tools to shape leadership and learning*. Paper proposed for presentation at the NSSA Conference. October, 2011, New Orleans, LA.

Abshire, S. (2010, August/September). Best practices - sif if you please. *EDTECH Focus on K-12*, 45-46.

Abshire, S. (2009, March). Calcasieu technology tools: real tools, real kids, real success. *Electronic School eZine*, Retrieved from <http://www.nsba.org/SecondaryMenu/TLN/TLN/ElectronicSchooleZinePastIssues/March-2009-Electronic-School-eZine/Calcasieu-Technology-Treasures.aspx>

Abshire, S. (2007). *The Impact of Louisiana INTECH Professional Development on Elementary School Leaders' Perceptions of Change and Student Achievement* (Doctoral dissertation, University of New Orleans).

Abshire, S. (2004, November 1). A is for advocacy. *School CIO*, Retrieved from <http://www.schoolcio.com/showarticle/648>

Abshire, S. (2002). Toolkit - grantwriting made easy. *School Library Journal*, Retrieved from <http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA192980.html>

Abshire, S. & Mason, D. (1992). Current events connection. *The Electronic School: Innovative Uses of Technology in Education*, September, A35-A36. Mason, D. (Summer 1990). Global classmates. *Telecommunications in Education News*, 1(3), 10-11.

PERSONAL

Family – Married 45 years - Andress Abshire, Senior Vice President – First Federal Bank of Louisiana

Mother of three children: Amy – Principal STEM Academy Spring High School, Spring Texas ISD Public Schools, Laura – Graduate of LSU Law School, former Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for Congressman Mike Ross from Arkansas, presently Director of Policy and Sustainability National Restaurant Association and Brian – Senior Investment Consultant Aon- Hewitt Investments in Chicago, Illinois

Community - Former board member and presently sustainer with the Junior League of Lake Charles, Past President of the Ivy League Garden Club

Community involvement includes the Cancer Society Show for Life, Christmas in April, Arts Fest, Calcasieu Parish Library Advisory Board, Condea/VISTA Community Advisory Board, Alpha Delta Pi Alumni Association Board, Women and Children's Hospital Advisory Board, and the Calcasieu Parish Democratic Executive Committee
Delegate to 1992 and 2008 Democratic Conventions